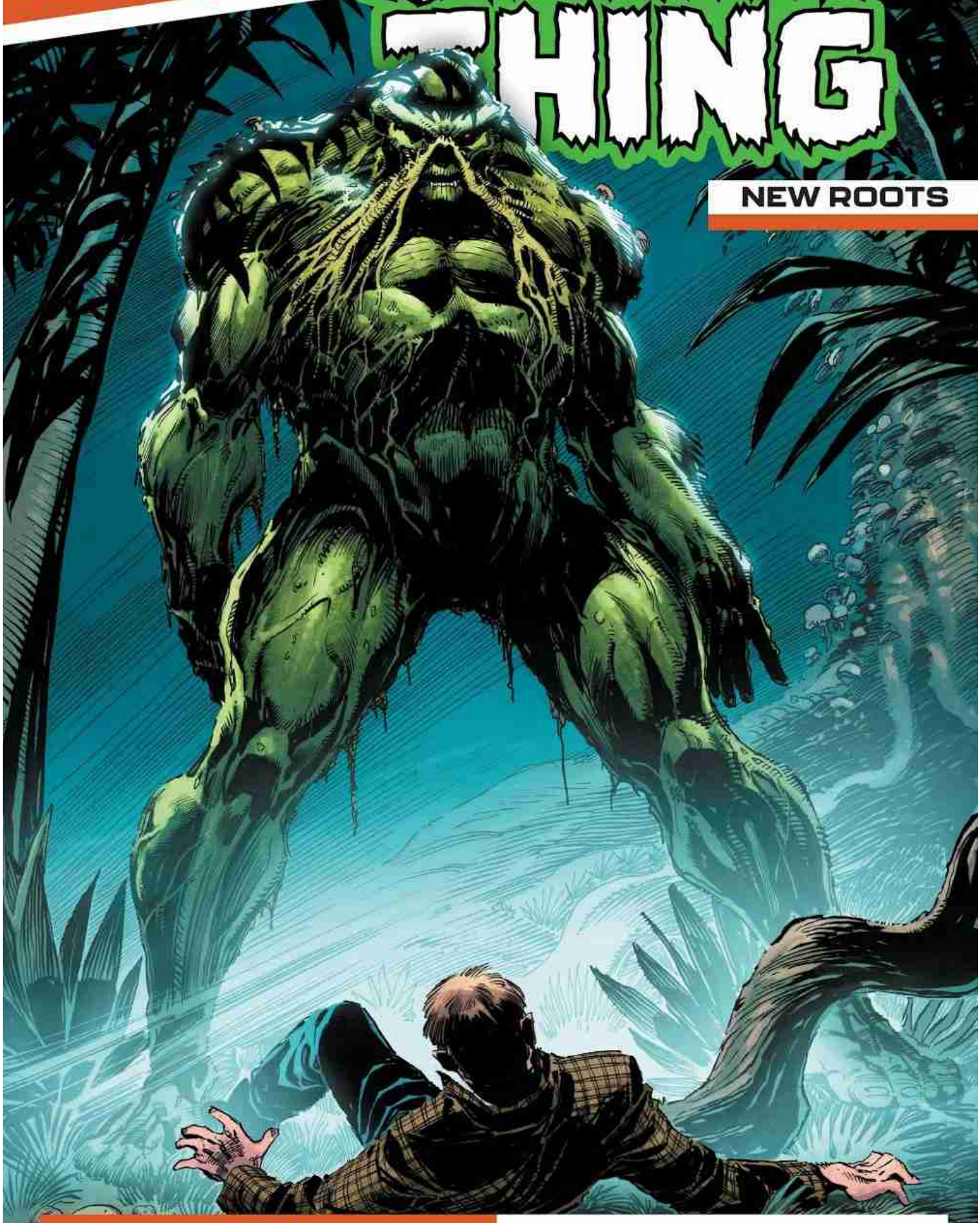
DC DIGITAL FIRST

SWAMP THING

NEW ROOTS



KIND

CONSTANT - MANDRAKE - HI-FI

THE BAYOU BLUEBIRD WAR

HESTER - MANDRAKE - HI-FI

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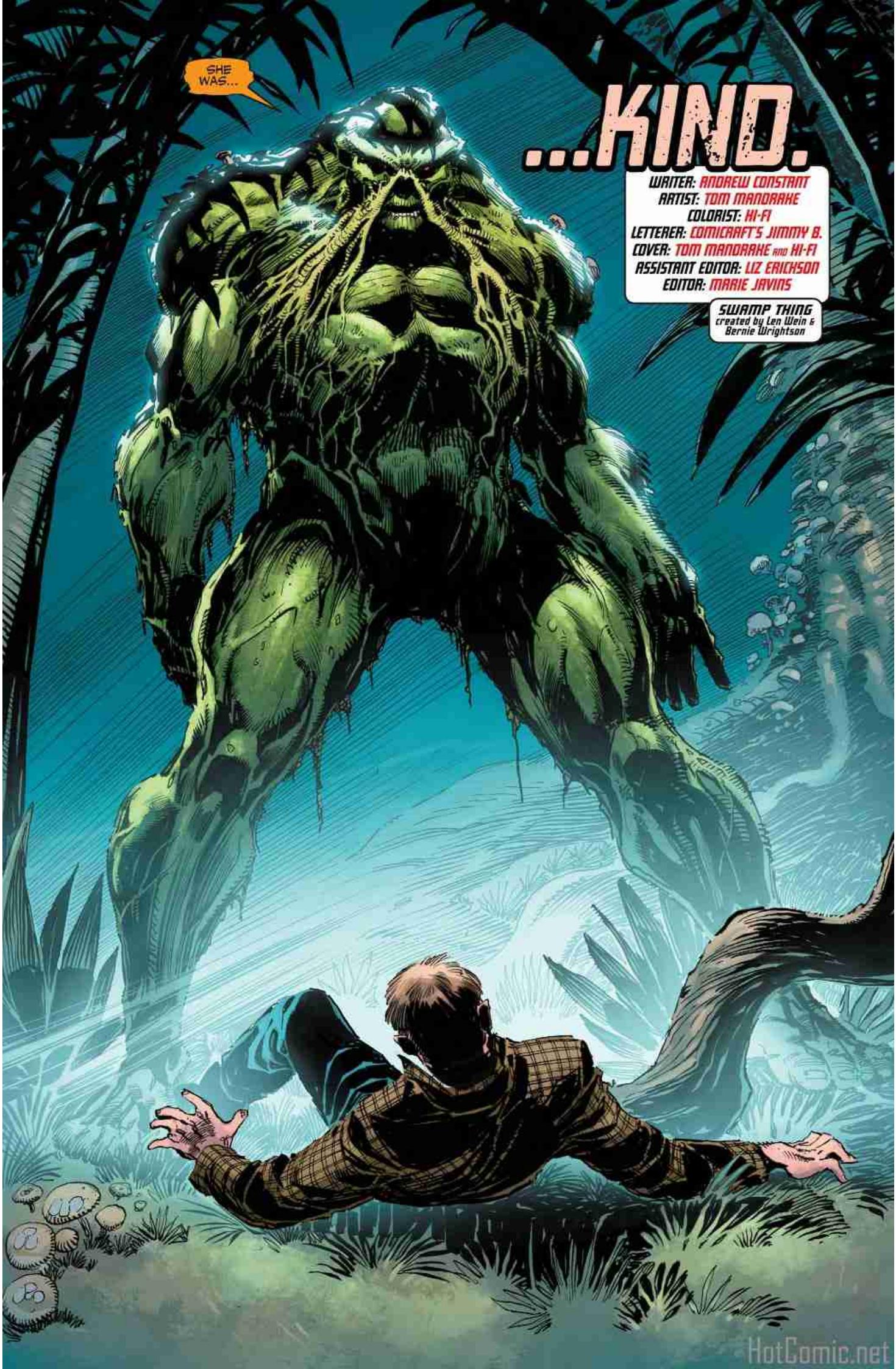

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"SHE WAS KIND... BUT SHE...HADN'T HAD...A KIND LIFE.
"SHE...HAD BEEN... MARRIED. HER HUSBAND...HAD BEEN...CRUEL.
"SHE LEFT...AND EVENTUALLY...CAME HERE. SHE WAS RAISED...IN A PLACE...LIKE THIS...
"SHE WAS LOOKING... FOR PEACE... HAPPINESS..."
OH, HELLO. IT'S BEEN A WHILE, HASN'T IT?
YES...IT HAS. THESE ARE...FOR YOU.
"I LIKE TO THINK...SHE FOUND...WHAT SHE WAS... AFTER...
"I LIKE TO THINK...SHE FOUND..."
YOU SHOULDN'T HAVE...
THEY'RE BEAUTIFUL.
"...FRIENDSHIP..."

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"BUT...HER HUSBAND... REMARRIED.
"AND...LATER IN LIFE...HAD A SON.
"HER HUSBAND... TOLD HIS SON... MANY UNTRUTHS... ABOUT HER...
"AND JUST... BEFORE... HE...DIED...
"...HER HUSBAND TOLD...A FINAL STORY. A LIE... ABOUT...A THEFT.
"TO DISTRACT FROM...HIS FAILURES...
WHERE'S THE MONEY? YOU BETTER STILL HAVE IT.
WHO ARE... WHAT...
W-WHAT MONEY?
"IT WAS...THIS LIE... THAT KILLED HER."

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BECAUSE AFTER YOU... THREATENED HER...HURT HER...
...EVEN MORE THAN... YOUR FATHER... EVER HAD...
...REALIZING... SHE HAD... NOTHING...
...YOU PUT A BULLET THROUGH HER HEAD--
BLAM
--JUST LIKE THAT, YOU FREAK!
YES, JUST LIKE... THAT.
TIME TO...RUN AGAIN.

HOW DO YOU KNOW WHAT HAPPENED?! YOU WEREN'T THERE!
I WASN'T. I WAS... SOMEWHERE ELSE.
BUT WHEN... I CAME BACK... I KNEW.
I KNEW WHAT... HAD TO...BE DONE.
STOP! LET ME GO! TAKE IT DOWN!
I'M NOT... DOING IT.
SHE IS.
YOU DUG...A DEEP HOLE...
...BUT NOTHING... STAYS BURIED...IN THE SWAMP.

NO...
...YOU LED ME, DROVE ME BACK HERE!
I DID.
BLAM
AAAAAAAH!
WHAT... HAPPENS NEXT... THOUGH...
...IS UP...TO HER.
NO! DON'T! PLEEEEASE--
--DON'T LET ME DIE!
PLEASE MAKE HER STOP!

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I HAVE NEVER SLEPT.
I WAS NOT MADE TO REST.
LOOK, MAMA! MONSTERS!
THE BAYOU BLUE BIRD WAR
Writer: Phil Hester
Artist: Tom Mandrake
Colorist: Hi-Fi
Letterer: Dave Sharpe
Editor: Liz Erickson
Swamp Thing created by Len Wein and Bernie Wrightson
EVERY SECOND OF YOUR HISTORY HAS PLAYED BEFORE MY UNBLINKING EYES.
I DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU THINGS ARE...BUT I CAN'T LET YOU... HARM THIS FAMILY!
HELP ME!
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DO YOU HEAR ME?
BEFORE YOU WALKED, BEFORE ANYTHING SO MUCH AS CRAWLED--
--BEFORE YOUR PLANET WAS MORE THAN A MOLTEN CLOT OF SLAG THROWN FROM YOUR SUN--
--I WAS HERE.
I RECALL MY JOY WHEN LIFE FINALLY BLOOMED HERE--
I... CAN'T...
CAN'T...
UNNHHH!
--AND YOUR LIVES BEGAN TO FROTH OVER THE SURFACE OF THIS WORLD--
--BUBBLES OF CURIOSITY AND DESIRE AND WANT EXPANDING LIKE THE UNIVERSE ITSELF--
--BURSTING AT THE SLIGHTEST INJURY, BURSTING UNDER YOUR OWN OUTWARD PRESSURE.

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I THOUGHT OF MY SIBLINGS STATIONED ON THE DRY, DARK WORLDS WHERE LIFE MIGHT NEVER COME.
HOW GLAD I WAS TO BE ASSIGNED TO THIS GARDEN.
FOR I WAS MADE TO WATCH OVER YOU--
--TO BRING YOU THE GIFTS THAT MIGHT DEFEND YOUR HOME FROM THE BLIGHT.
UHHHHH...
AS YOU CANNOT COMPREHEND MY NATURE, I CANNOT COMPREHEND THAT OF MY BUILDERS.
BUT THEIR PURPOSE IS CLEAR--
FWASSH!
--THAT I EQUIP THE NATIVES OF YOUR WORLD TO FIGHT BACK AGAINST THE BLIGHT'S ADVANCE.
FOR WHOLE UNIVERSES HAVE FALLEN DEAD AT THEIR HAND.
NO.

NO!
ENTIRE DIMENSIONS ONCE RIOTOUS WITH THE COLOR OF LIFE NOW DRIFT SILENT AND WHITE.
SHRAKK!
YOU...YOU MONSTERS!
BUT THERE WAS IRONY IN THE GIFTS I GAVE.
YOU WERE TOO FRAGILE TO BEAR THEIR POWER.
YOUR BODIES WARPED AND BROKE, BECAME MONSTROUS IN YOUR OWN EYES.
AND MY FORM WAS FEARSOME TO YOU.
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SO I BURIED MY GIFTS BELOW YOUR HOMES--
--HOPING TO SPARE YOU THE TRAUMA OF MY BLESSING--
--THAT SOME LIFE-FORM MAY RISE AMONG YOU--
--STURDY ENOUGH TO BEAR THE FULL FORCE OF MY GIFT.
A MONSTER TO SHOULDER A MONSTROUS BOON.

THERE WAS ALSO IRONY IN THE BLIGHT'S ARRIVAL, GUILE BEING AT THE CORE OF THEIR NATURE.
THEY CAME TO THIS PLANE CLOAKED IN A CHARM OF GREAT BEAUTY.
ONLY THROUGH MY EYES CAN MY WARDS SEE THEM AS THEY TRULY ARE---
--AND KNOW THE VILE MACHINES THEY BUILD TO WRENCH OPEN THE BARRIERS BETWEEN WORLDS.

BEAR ME UP, CHILD OF FLESH AND FROND.
FWOKK!
BEAR ME AGAINST THE BLIGHT THAT ERASES ALL LIFE.
SH-SHRAK!
UNGH!
BEAR ME INTO A WAR THAT BEGAN BEFORE TIME ITSELF.
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WAIT... WHAT ARE YOU...
SKLUKK!
WHERE ARE YOU--
BEAR ME INTO THE BREACH BETWEEN WORLDS.
SO, AS BOTH MY MAKERS AND YOURS INTENDED...
...LIFE MAY EVER FLOURISH IN THIS GARDEN.
LOOK, MAMA! A MONSTER!
END
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SON OF ULTRON